

still see too many firefighters die in the line of duty, protecting our families and homes. We have a lot more work to do.

USFA supports local fire departments in a variety of manners. It offers training and career development to thousands of mid-level firefighters, fire chiefs, and other emergency management officials. USFA is a great way for the federal government to help coordinate the efforts for firefighters at the local level.

USFA also develops fire education and awareness curriculum material to be used in training citizens across the country, aiming its messages at groups who suffer the highest fire casualties, such as the young and the elderly.

While Congress is working to reauthorize and build on this important program, the president is cutting the budget for this agency. The President's FY09 budget cuts funding to USFA by more than 5 percent.

As firefighters learn to respond to new issues such as fires in the wildland-urban interface, terrorist events, and harmful materials incidents, we need to provide sufficient funds to train and prepare them for these situations.

Firefighters risk their lives everyday, so they can protect ours. Passing this legislation is one way we can express our great appreciation. I recommend my colleagues support this legislation so it can be signed into law before the end of the 110th Congress.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORMA DANIELS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Norma Daniels. My thoughts and prayers go out to her husband Bob and the rest of the Daniels family during this time of loss.

I admit that I have trouble knowing where to begin when it comes to honoring Norma. You could call her Madam Chairperson—she was the chair of the Kansas Rural Development Council. You could call her “nurse,” as that was her original occupation. Thousands of people called her “Senator,” and seven people call her “Mom.”

Norma was born in Yates Center, a town of about 1800 people in Woodson County, KS. She was raised in Kansas City, MO and did her undergraduate work at St. Louis University. After becoming a registered nurse, she met a young medical student at a hospital in Kansas City named Bob Daniels. Bob went on to complete his internship at St. Francis Hospital in Wichita, and while there, the two were married. Bob and Norma raised 6 daughters and 1 son.

Knowing of her extensive service to her community through various volunteer organizations, Bob raised the question of whether Norma should run for City Council. Norma reacted in shock, saying she didn't know anything or care about politics.

Sometime later, she was paying her city water bill and asked the city clerk what it

would take to run for city council. The clerk replied, “Who would like to know—certainly not you, Norma.” She answered, “Why not?” The clerk said, “City business is like big business, and women just don't understand it.” That was all the motivation that she needed. Norma ran for and won a seat on the city council, and never looked back—winning every election she entered.

Norma knew she was a novice and became a student of government, reading through ordinance books and state laws and visiting the police and fire stations to learn the laws. Her work paid off, and her successful career on the city council and encouragement from her community led her to challenge a long time incumbent Kansas State Senator. She became the first female State Senator ever elected from Sedgwick County, winning by only 176 votes of the nearly 23,000 cast. The media called her victory a fluke, but they were wrong. She was re-elected to the Senate twice more, and in January of 1993 she retired.

I had the opportunity to serve with Norma in the Kansas State Senate. Norma was a tireless advocate for her constituents and always a professional. Her list of honors and activities is remarkable. She was one of the first to represent Kansas in Tokyo at the Japan American Grassroots Summit, a founder of the Valley Center Swim Club and a co-leader of the Girl Scouts. But she kept it all in perspective. Throughout her life she was a believer of rural America, saying that is where the real diamonds of family life are found. She found great happiness in serving others and in making life a little better for those who needed a hand, and that is why Madam Speaker, I rise to honor her today.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. WELLER of Illinois. Madam Speaker, had I been present for Rollcall votes 616 through 618. I was absent on Monday, September 24th due to personal reasons.

If I were present I would have voted, “Aye” on Rollcall vote 616, “Aye” on Rollcall vote 617, and “Aye” on Rollcall vote 618.

CELEBRATING THE 97TH NATIONAL DAY OF THE REPUBLIC OF TAIWAN

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise as a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and member of the House Taiwan caucus, to honor the people of the Republic of China (Taiwan)—a strong strategic partner and ally not only to the United States but also among the democratic nations of our world—as they prepare to celebrate their 97th National Day on October 10th.

Taiwan's National Day, also known as Double Ten Day for its date on October 10th, marks the start of the revolution that toppled the Qing dynasty and established the Republic of China, the first republic in Asia. Many Chinese on Taiwan have compared the celebration of this day with our own Independence Day and celebrate with the notable spectacle of parades and fireworks.

It has been nearly a century since October 10, 1911 and the ROC on Taiwan has become a full-fledged democracy. Just twenty some years ago, Taiwan was a closed authoritarian society with no freedom of speech, no freedom of assembly, and no right to vote. It now has robust political parties, and virtually every office in Taiwan is contested through free and fair elections. This past March, Taiwan successfully concluded the fourth popular election for president since 1996, showing once again her unwavering commitment to democracy and freedom. May Taiwan long continue to be a beacon of prosperity and freedom for all of Asia.

I believe that all Americans should be proud that Taiwan and the United States have enjoyed such a strong and durable relationship. Taiwan is one of our largest trading partners and the cultural exchanges between our two peoples are as vibrant as they have ever been. We are committed to defending Taiwan under the framework of the Taiwan Relations Act, and we are fully committed to a peaceful solution of the Taiwan issue; no military conflict should ever occur in the Taiwan Strait.

Taiwan has stood shoulder to shoulder with the United States to combat the scourge of global terrorism; and the people of Taiwan have always given generously in our greatest times of need with monetary contributions to the Twin Towers Fund, Pentagon Memorial Fund and through offer of humanitarian assistance to victims of Hurricane Katrina. Taiwan and the United States are not merely allies; we are friends and partners in the truest sense of the words.

I have been a long-time supporter of Taiwan and hope that my colleagues and I will continue to improve relations not only between the United States and Taiwan but between Taiwan and the international community. It is imperative that the United States take more active steps to support Taiwan's ongoing efforts to participate in the World Health Organization, the United Nations, and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group and other regional and multi-national organizations. It is regrettable that Taiwan has been excluded from these organizations. It has been a gross injustice to deny Taiwan's 23 million people their proper voice in the world.

I myself have been to Taiwan on numerous occasions and have supported the work of its leaders through tremendous challenges, particularly in reference to cross-strait relations. As we continue to work toward solutions in this region of the world, let us commemorate and remember the ongoing commitment to democracy exemplified by Taiwan.

Madam Speaker, I would ask all of my colleagues to join me now to thank the people of Taiwan for their friendship, to congratulate them on the 97th Anniversary of National Day, and to renew our commitment to further develop and strengthen the bonds between our two peoples.